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DISCOURSE
ON
Chriſtmaſs-Day.

1706

St. JOHN, I. xiv.
And the Word was made Fleſh, &c.

THE Night is paſt, the Day is come, the Day of the New Redemption, of the Ancient Reſtauration, of Eternal Happineſs; the Day when the LORD wrought a New Thing on the Earth, and mindful of our Infirmities, deſcending from the Height of his Father's Glory, did not diſdain to viſit the Earth, and by the ſhining Brightneſs of His coming, to reſtore to Mankind, the Light which they had loſt.

The Deſire of all Nations is come, He is come from Mount *Lebanon*, from His Royal Manſions he is come; the Earth is opened, and has brought forth a Saviour.

Now is the Fear of the Old Tranſgreſſion removed, which Humane Frailty, circumvented by Frauds of

of the Devil, had incurred; Nature, purged from the Ancient Contagion, is returned to its Primitive Dignity; Iniquity is returned to Innocence; and what was Old is become New. For He, who was to make them Gods who were but Men, was made Man, who was GOD indeed; and without losing what he was, vouchsafed Himself to become, what he had made.

In the Beginning of Time, GOD made Man after His own Image and Likeness; in the Fulness of Time, GOD was made Man in our Image & Likeness. The First Man was of the Earth, Earthly; the Second Man is from Heaven, Heavenly. The One, by Transgressing the Commandments of GOD, introduced the Condemnation of Sin: the Other, being made under the Law, restored the Freedom of Righteousness. The One, when he was but a Man, aspired to be God, and so perished: the Other, being GOD, condescended to become Man, that He might revive that which had been destroyed.

Thus truly, He, who before Time, was the Only Begotten of the Father; in Time, was the Only Born of the Mother; Immortal with the Father, Mortal by the Mother: by the Father, the Beginning of Life, and by the Mother, the End of Death: after his Mother, made of His Mother; before his Mother, of His Father, but, not made: without whom

whom, the Father never was; and without whom, the Mother never could have been. O Amazing Power! but more Amazing Mercy, that He, who could indeed be Born thus, ſhould condeſcend to be Born after ſuch a Manner!

The Son of GOD was pleaſed thus to be Born, that he might, by the Antidote of ſuch Unuſual Humility, expel the Poiſon, with which, Pride of old had infected us. He was pleaſed to be numbered among Men, even at that Time, when *Rome* the Empreſs of Nations, to exalt the Pride and Glory of Her Empire, had commanded all the World to be Taxed.

The Firſt Viſiters of the Celeſtial Babe, yet hanging on the Virgin's Breaſts, were Poor Shepherds, by the Information of the Angels: Things, which He had hid from the Wiſe and Prudent, thus the MOST HIGH revealed to Babes; and was pleaſed to make Choice of Shepherds to be Witneſſes of his Birth, who was afterwards to take Fiſher-men to be His Diſciples.

The Celeſtial Babe, in a cold Froſty Winter's Night, wrapp'd up in Courſe and Homely Swadling Clothes, was laid upon nothing but hard Straw and rough Hay. The Divine Mother, for whom there was no Place in the Inn, took up her Lodgings in a Stable. A poor Mother, a poor Son, a poor Hoſtel; the Mother in the Straw, the Son in the Manger. This was the Lodging, which the Creator of the

World

World did chooſe; and theſe were the Delights, that attended the Holy Virgin's Lying-in.

Oh Vain Pride of Man, thus depreſs'd, by the Humility of GOD, born among Mortals! Oh Deceitful Riches, condemned by the Poverty of Chriſt! Oh the Fleeting Nature of all Earthly and Worldly Pleaſures, overwhelm'd by the Cradle of our Redeemer!

Let us then learn theſe New Leſſons of Wiſdom for our Inſtruction, from a Maſter that could not yet ſpeak. In vain do we call our ſelves Chriſtians, if we are not Imitators of Chriſt. Let us look then to the Rock, from whence we were hewen; and to the Pit, from whence we were taken. Let us, the Sons, love thoſe Things, which the Father has loved. Let us, who are Servants, tread in the ſame Steps, which our Great Maſter has ſet us.

We, with the Apoſtle, ſaid before, That the Firſt Man is of the Earth, Earthly; the Second Man is from Heaven, Heavenly: And here with the ſame Apoſtle, we add, As we have born the Image of the Earthly, let us alſo bear the Image of the Heavenly: Let us caſt away the VVorks of Darkneſs, which the Son of GOD came to free us from; and let us put on the Armour of Light, which the Eternal Son of Righteouſneſs has at His Riſing, brought down from Heaven, that ſo bringing forth ſuitable Fruits to the Dignity of our Regeneration, and walking honeſtly as in the Day, we may by the Aſſiſtance of God, be conducted at laſt, to the Imoyment of His Promiſes; and be worthy to all Eternity, of ſeeing the Saviour of the VVorld, reigning in His Majeſty, as we now here on Earth, adore GOD for His Incarnation. *Amen.*